

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7473

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 3520

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BG, US

SUBJECT: BDG AFFIRMS THIRD COUNTRY RULE

REF: DACCA 3175

1. IN A NOTE TO ALL DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS, DATED JULY 5, BUT DELIVERED TO US ONLY TODAY, THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS REQUESTED ADHERENCE TO THE THIRD-COUNTRY RULE. OPERATIVE SENTENCE OF THE NOTE READS QUOTE THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS...WHILE ASSURING (ALL DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS) OF GOVERNMENT'S READINESS, AT ALL TIMES, TO EXTEND WHOLE-HEARTED SUPPORT AND COOPERATION IN THEIR EFFORT TO CARRY OUT LEGITIMATE PUBLICITY WORK DESIGNED TO PROJECT THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES AND TO PROMOTE FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH BANGLADESH, HAS THE HONOUR TO REQUEST THAT THEY MAY NOT UNDERTAKE ANY PUBLICITY, WRITTEN OR OTHERWISE, WHICH CONTAINS ADVERSE OR DEROGATORY REFERENCES TO THIRD COUNTRIES WITH WHOM BANGLADESH MAINTAIN FRIENDLY RELATIONS. END QUOTE.

2. WE HAVE BEEN EXPECTING THE NOTE SINCE MAY WHEN FOREIGN SECRETARY TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT STERN NOTE WOULD BE ISSUED IN ORDER TO CURB VIOLATIONS OF THIRD COUNTRY RULE SUCH AS THOSE COMMITTED BY PRG WHICH WE HAD REPEATEDLY PROTESTED. PRESUMABLY SHEIKH MUJIB'S PUBLIC REQUEST FOR THE OBSERVANCE OF DIPLOMATIC DECORUM IN

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HIS SPEECH OF JUNE 19 (REFTEL) PAVED WAY FOR ISSUANCE

OF THE NOTE. NO VIOLATIONS OF THE THIRD COUNTRY RULE, IN THE STRICTEST SENSE, HAVE COME TO OUR ATTENTION LATELY. HOWEVER, THE HEAVY USE OF COMMUNIST WIRE SERVICE MATERIAL IN THE GOVERNMENT PRESS CONTINUES, AND TENDENTIOUS MATERIAL DOES GET PUBLISHED. DURING COURTESY CALL ON INFORMATION MINISTER KORBAN ALI JULY 15, AMBASSADOR BROUGHT THE INCREASING USE OF THIS MATERIAL TO THE MINISTER'S ATTENTION, INCLUDING A PARTICULARLY SCURRILOUS NORTH KOREAN NEWS AGENCY ARTICLE ATTACKING USG OFFICIALS AND POLICY PUBLISHED RECENTLY IN THE OBSERVER. KORBAN ALI ASSURED AMBASSADOR THAT BDG DOES NOT INTEND TO ALLOW OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO USE THE OFFICIAL PRESS OF DACCA FOR THEIR OWN PURPOSES. ALSO OBSERVER EDITOR WAS MOST APOLOGETIC TO PAO FOR THE "INADVERTENT" PUBLICATION OF THE ARTICLE, AND WE SUSPECT THAT WIRE REPORTS WILL BE VETTED MORE CAREFULLY IN THE FUTURE.
BOSTER

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